

Chualar Union Elementary School District

Grand Jury Reponses to the Nine Findings of their Final Report

Please find below the Chualar Union Elementary School District's response to each of the nine findings from the 2000 Monterey County Civil Grand Jury's as found in their Final Report.

FINDINGS-RESPONSES

- #1: The educational concerns of the School cannot be considered in a vacuum, as issues relating to cultural values, housing, health care, and municipal services in Chualar impact the School and its mission.

Response to finding #1

The School has implemented a concerted effort to factor all relevant, economic, local, county, regional, and statewide elements in the planning, development, evaluation, and progress improvement of our education instruction services. We not only look at the child, we consider the environment from which they come to us-we strive to mitigate as many of the negative factors that may limit our students opportunities for a long, healthy, successful, and productive life.

- #2: Conducting public school instruction in English has been the law since California voters passed Proposition 227 in 1998 allowing for only one year of English immersion instruction. The law does allow some flexibility, however, in cases of special needs. Students in Chualar have benefited from programs available for English learners through Title I's Even Start and Title V11. Additional programs for adult English language learners, notable Even Start Family Literacy and Community-Based English Tutoring (CBE), have been started in Chualar with good response.

Response to Finding #2

In the effort to ensure that "no child is left behind" requires the development of a Childs guardian's ability to become an integral part of their child's education-including English Language acquisition. Acquiring resources to service the "whole child" will be a sustained effort at Chualar Elementary School.

- #3: Parents and community members need to be more involved in decisions relating to the School's curriculum and policies. Encouraging attendance at Board meetings and participation in School activities and on School committees will increase understanding and support for the School's educational goals.

Response to Finding #3

Several internal initiatives have been implemented to change the cultural of Chualar Elementary School - to view parents as the School's and a Teacher's partner in facilitating the academic success of our students. Board, Teacher, and support staff training in school and Parent relationships have been implemented and/or scheduled. Several events have instituted training opportunities to develop parent's ability to understand educational issues and assist in the planning and development of Chualar continued success.

- #4: The exodus of many Chualar students to other school districts (more than 10% of the student body in the Spring of 2000) diminishes the financial and educational resources available in Chualar. It

also reduces the opportunities for teaching children the value of tolerance and appreciation for all cultures.

Response to finding #4

Chualar has implemented a number of in-school and after-school programs that will assist in the retention of the District's students. A number of organizational, human resource, and curriculum elements at Chualar have been revamped an/or improved to ensure our program's relevance to our communities youth and their parents.

- #5: Board members, particularly at the beginning of their terms, need structured training programs to insure understanding of the opportunities and restrictions that come with their positions. The Small School Districts' Association has a workshop specifically targeted to the needs of small district trustees, and the California School Boards Association offers training tailored to the needs of individual districts. Local support is available through the Monterey County Office of Education.

Response to finding #5

The Chualar Board of Education has completed a number of capacity and awareness development training events. These efforts will continue, as the board will sustain a continued process and capacity development program.

- #6: An atmosphere of trust and mutual respect has been missing at times between the Board and certain District staff, but is essential if their shared goal of providing the best possible education for Chualar's children is to be attained.

Response to finding #6

All human sectors of Chualar have participated in development training that will develop and sustain an environment of mutual collaboration and community asset synergy that will support and sustain academic achievement

- #7: In addition to observing the basic structure provided by Robert's Rules of Order, the smooth, expeditious conduct of Board meetings would benefit from better sound and translation equipment.

Response to finding #7

The instituted process, policies, and supporting equipment utilized and applied in the conduction of Chualar's Board of Education meetings have been refined to increase understanding and participation of all relevant parties.

- #8: Agendas provided for the public are difficult to follow and not sufficiently descriptive of the subjects to be discussed. Therefore, the public comment periods permitted by the Board are not conducive to audience participation.

Response to finding #8

The instituted process, policies, and supporting equipment utilized and applied in the conduction of Chualar's Board of Education meetings have been refined to increase understanding and participation of all relevant parties.

- #9: Consolidation with another school district would have a number of financial and educational benefits for CUESD. Students would have access to greater resources and broader learning experiences. Economies could be realized by such means as group purchasing and reduced administrative costs.

Response to finding #9

Utilizing a strictly fiscal analysis-the consolidation of Chualar Elementary into a neighboring District may seem reasonable and the fiscal responsible thing to do. However, research will not support that consolidation will have a positive outcome for our students and their families. The Chualar Elementary is a major community asset, a source of pride and identification-locally controlled for the benefit of the community's children.